**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Original): An asymmetric reaction catalyst obtained by mixing a pentavalent niobium compound and a triol or tetraol having an optically active binaphthol structure of R or S configuration.

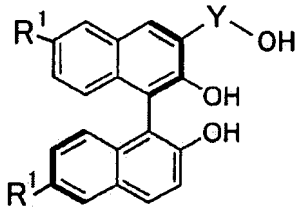
Claim 2 (Original): An asymmetric reaction catalyst according to claim 1, wherein the niobium compound is represented by the following formula:

$NbX_5$

(wherein, X is an alkoxide or a halogen atom).

Claims 3-13 (Cancelled).

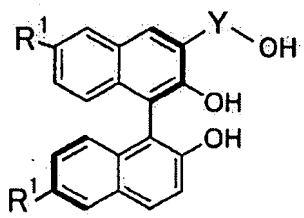
Claim 14 (New): An asymmetric reaction catalyst according to claim 1, wherein the triol is represented by the following formula (I):




(I)

(wherein, Y represents a divalent hydrocarbon group and $R^1$ represents a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a perfluoroalkyl group having at most four carbons, or an alkyl group or alkoxy group having at most 4 carbons).

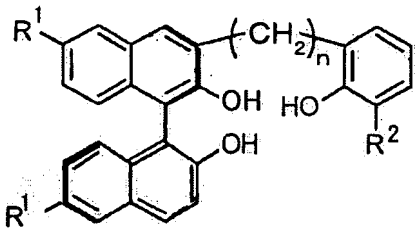
Claim 15 (New): An asymmetric reaction catalyst according to claim 2, wherein the triol is represented by the following formula (I):




(I)

(wherein, Y represents a divalent hydrocarbon group and $R^1$ represents a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a perfluoroalkyl group having at most four carbons, or an alkyl group or alkoxy group having at most 4 carbons).

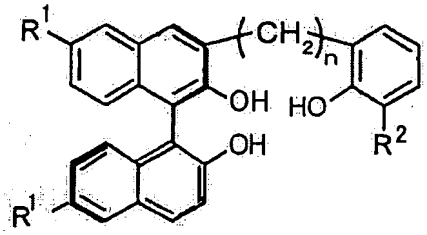
Claim 16 (New): An asymmetric reaction catalyst according to claim 1, wherein the triol is represented by the following formula (II):




(II)

(wherein, $R^1$ represents a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a perfluoroalkyl group having at most 4 carbons, or an alkyl group or an alkoxy group having at most four carbons; $R^2$ represents a hydrogen atom or a hydrocarbon group having 1 to 10 carbons; and n is an integer from 0 to 2).

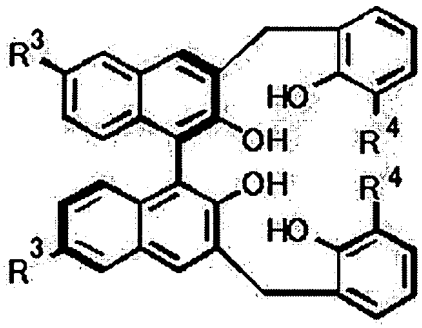
Claim 17 (New): An asymmetric reaction catalyst according to claim 2, wherein the triol is represented by the following formula (II):




(II)

(wherein, $R^1$ represents a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a perfluoroalkyl group having at most 4 carbons, or an alkyl group or an alkoxy group having at most four carbons; $R^2$ represents a hydrogen atom or a hydrocarbon group having 1 to 10 carbons; and n is an integer from 0 to 2).

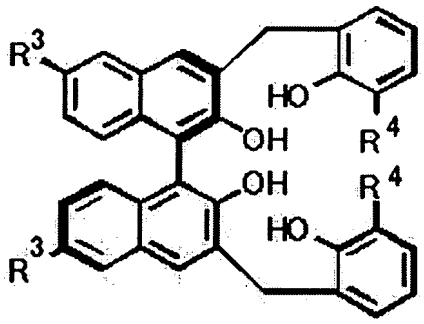
Claim 18 (New): An asymmetric reaction catalyst according to claim 1, wherein the tetraol is represented by the following formula (III):




(III)

(wherein, $R^3$ represents a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a perfluoroalkyl group having at most 4 carbons, or an alkyl group or alkoxy group having at most 4 carbons and $R^4$ represents a hydrogen atom or a hydrocarbon group having 1 to 10 carbons).

Claim 19 (New): An asymmetric reaction catalyst according to claim 2, wherein the tetraol is represented by the following formula (III):




(III)

(wherein, $R^3$ represents a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a perfluoroalkyl group having at most 4 carbons, or an alkyl group or alkoxy group having at most 4 carbons and $R^4$ represents a hydrogen atom or a hydrocarbon group having 1 to 10 carbons).

Claim 20 (New): A method for preparing an optically active compound, wherein a reaction substrate represented by $R^5R^6C=N-Z$ (wherein $R^5$ and $R^6$, not being the same, are selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, a hydrocarbon group, an alkoxycarbonyl group, and a hydrocarbon group having a functional group and Z represents an aryl group or an acylamino group) and a nucleophilic agent are reacted by nucleophilic addition using an asymmetric reaction catalyst according to claim 1.

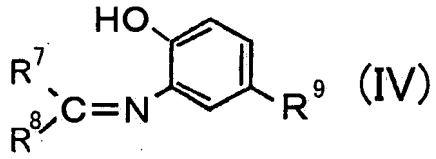
Claim 21 (New): A method for preparing an optically active compound, wherein a reaction substrate represented by $R^5R^6C=N-Z$ (wherein $R^5$ and $R^6$, not being the same, are selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, a hydrocarbon group, an alkoxycarbonyl group, and a hydrocarbon group having a functional group and Z represents an aryl group or an acylamino group) and a nucleophilic agent are reacted by nucleophilic addition using an asymmetric reaction catalyst according to claim 2.

Claim 22 (New): A method for preparing an optically active compound, wherein a reaction substrate represented by $R^5R^6C=N-Z$ (wherein $R^5$ and $R^6$, not being the same, are selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, a hydrocarbon group, an alkoxycarbonyl group, and a hydrocarbon group having a functional group and Z represents an aryl group or an acylamino group) and a nucleophilic agent are reacted by nucleophilic addition using an asymmetric reaction catalyst according to claim 14.

Claim 23 (New): A method for preparing an optically active compound, wherein a reaction substrate represented by $R^5R^6C=N-Z$ (wherein $R^5$ and $R^6$, not being the same, are selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, a hydrocarbon group, an alkoxycarbonyl group, and a hydrocarbon group having a functional group and Z represents an aryl group or an acylamino group) and a nucleophilic agent are reacted by nucleophilic addition using an asymmetric reaction catalyst according to claim 15.

Claim 24 (New): A method for preparing an optically active compound, wherein a reaction substrate represented by $R^5R^6C=N-Z$ (wherein $R^5$ and $R^6$, not being the same, are selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, a hydrocarbon group, an alkoxycarbonyl group, and a hydrocarbon group having a functional group and Z represents an aryl group or an acylamino group) and a nucleophilic agent are reacted by nucleophilic addition using an asymmetric reaction catalyst according to claim 16.

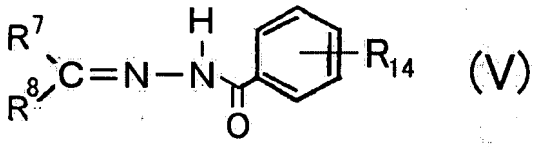
Claim 25 (New): A method for preparing an optically active compound according to claim 20, wherein the above-mentioned reaction substrate is an imine represented by the following formula (IV):




(IV)

(wherein, $R^7$ and $R^8$, not being the same, are selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, a hydrocarbon group, and a hydrocarbon group having a functional group and $R^9$ represents a hydrogen atom or a trifluoromethyl group).

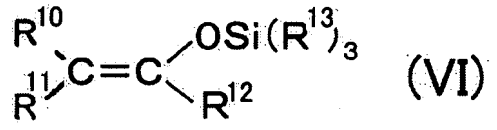
Claim 26 (New): A method for preparing an optically active compound according to claim 20, wherein the above-mentioned reaction substrate is a benzoylhydrazone represented by the following formula (V):




(V)

(wherein, $R^7$ and $R^8$, not being the same, are selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, a hydrocarbon group, and a hydrocarbon group having a functional group and $R^{14}$ represents a hydrogen atom or a substituent having an electron-withdrawing property).

Claim 27 (New): A method for preparing an optically active compound according to claim 20, wherein the above-mentioned nucleophilic agent is a silicon enolate represented by the following formula (VI):



(VI)

(wherein $R^{10}$ and $R^{11}$ are each independently one selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, an aliphatic hydrocarbon group, an aromatic hydrocarbon group, an alkyloxy group, an aryloxy group, and an silyloxy group; $R^{12}$ is one selected from the group consisting of a hydrogen atom, an aliphatic hydrocarbon group, an alkyloxy group, an aryloxy group, an arylthio group, and a alkylthio group; and each $R^{13}$, being the same or different, represents a hydrocarbon group).

Claim 28 (New): A method for preparing an optically active compound according to claim 20, wherein an imidazole derivative is added to the reaction system.

Claim 29 (New): A method for preparing an optically active compound according to claim 20, wherein a synthetic crystalline zeolite is added to the reaction system.

Claim 30 (New): A method for preparing a optically active compound, wherein a reaction substrate and a nucleophilic agent are reacted by nucleophilic addition using an asymmetric reaction catalyst according to claim 1.

Claim 31 (New): A method for preparing an optically active compound according to claim 30, wherein the reaction substrate is an epoxide, the nucleophilic agent is a nitrogen compound, and the optically active compound is a nitrogen-containing compound.